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partially split from each other, the second segments having been melted and being a binder of the fiber-containing material, wherein the fiber-containing material has cross-over points of the first segments, where the first segments cross each other and wherein the second polymer material, of the second segments, is concentrated at the cross-over points.

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12. (Amended) Fiber-containing material according to claim 11, wherein the non-woven fabric has a weight of 0.1 to 40 ounces per square yard.

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15. (Amended) Fiber-containing material according to claim 9, wherein the multi-component fibers are microfibers.

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20. (Amended) Fiber-containing material according to claim 9, wherein the second segments have been completely split from the first segments.

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23. (Amended) Fiber-containing material according to claim 9, wherein the second polymer material, of the second segments, is substantially only at the cross-over points.

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29. (Amended) Fiber-containing material according to claim 9, wherein the first polymer material is selected from the group consisting of polyethylene terephthalate, polylactic acid, poly-cyclohexylene dimethylene terephthalate, and polyamides, and the second polymer material is selected from the group consisting of high density polyethylene, linear low

density polyethylene, polypropylene, polylactic acid, copolymers of polyethylene terephthalate, and polyamides, the first and second polymer materials being selected such that the melt temperature of the first polymer material is higher than that of the second polymer material.

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30. (Amended) Fiber-containing material made from a plurality of multi-component fibers, each multi-component fiber including at least first and second segments, the first and second segments being made respectively of a first polymer material and a second polymer material different from the first polymer material, the first polymer material having a higher melt temperature than that of the second polymer material, the first segments of the plurality of multi-component fibers having cross-over points with each other, and wherein second polymer material, of the second segments, having been melted and being concentrated at the cross-over points to act as a binder of the fiber-containing material.

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Please add the following new claims to the application:

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--61. Fiber-containing material according to claim 9, wherein the second polymer material, of the second segments, is evenly dispersed through the fiber-containing material, at said cross-over points of the first segments.

62. Fiber-containing material according to claim 9, wherein the second polymer material, of the second segments,

substantially encapsulates said cross-over points and is substantially only at said cross-over points.

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63. Fiber-containing material according to claim 9, wherein the first and second segments have been at least partially split from each other prior to the second segments having been melted.

64. Fiber-containing material according to claim 63, wherein the first and second segments have been at least partially split by differential shrinkage of the first and second polymer materials.

65. Fiber-containing material according to claim 9, the second segments having been melted and the first polymer material, of the first segments, not having been melted.

66. Fiber-containing material according to claim 9, wherein the difference in melt temperature between the first polymer material and the second polymer material is in the range of 10°-250°C.

67. Fiber-containing material, made by a process comprising the steps of:

collecting a plurality of multi-component fibers, the multi-component fibers having at least first segments and second segments respectively made of first and second polymer materials different from each other, the first polymer

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material having a higher melt temperature than that of the second polymer material;

splitting the second segments at least partially from the first segments; and

after said splitting, thermally bonding the first segments, to form the fiber-containing material, by melting the second polymer material of the second segments.

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68. Fiber-containing material according to claim 67, wherein the second polymer material is the only bonding agent thermally bonding the first segments.

69. Fiber-containing material according to claim 67, wherein in the thermal bonding the second polymer material of the second segments is melted without melting the first polymer material of the first segments.

70. Fiber-containing material according to claim 67, wherein in the collecting step, the plurality of multi-component fibers form cross-over points with each other, and in the thermal bonding step the second polymer material of the second segments is melted so as to encapsulate the first segments at the cross-over points.

71. Fiber-containing material according to claim 70, wherein after the thermal bonding the second polymer material of the second segments is substantially only at the cross-over points.

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72. Fiber-containing material according to claim 67,
wherein the multi-component fibers each contains 4-100
segments and is in a range of 0.7-100 deniers per filament,
and after splitting the segments are in a range of 0.01-20
deniers per filament. --
